


**CITY OF HOUSTON  
FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU  
HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT**



**LIFE SAFETY BUREAU (LSB) STANDARD 06  
FIRE DEPOSITORY BOXES**

**SUPERCEDES: HFD STANDARD 9-4 (3/12/01)**

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**LIFE SAFETY BUREAU (LSB) STANDARDS ARE ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF THE CITY OF HOUSTON FIRE CODE. THEY ARE SUBJECT TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECTIONS COVERING - ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS AND METHODS, MODIFICATIONS, AND BOARD OF APPEALS.**

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**FIRE DEPOSITORY BOXES**  
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## **LSB STANDARD 06**

### **FIRE DEPOSITORY BOXES**

#### **SECTION 1 --- GENERAL**

##### **1.1 Scope.**

This standard provides a method of furnishing current, valid property information and means of emergency access for fire department personnel in all high-rise occupancies, and other facilities as may be required by the Fire Marshal as called for in the *Fire Code* or this standard.

##### **1.2 Purpose.**

The purpose shall be to provide clarification of requirements and guidance to persons charged with providing and maintaining a fire depository box, as prescribed the *Fire Code*, and this standard, within a state of operational readiness and reliability.

This standard is subject to periodic review and updates, to accommodate changes in local need or requirements, changes in nationally recognized standards, in related technology, or where required by state or federal regulations.

#### **SECTION 2 --- DEFINITIONS**

##### **2.1 Fire Depository Box (FDB) .**

A protective container, cabinet or box that houses the information manuals, packets and keys as may be required by this standard.

##### **2.2 Key Box.**

A protective container or box used to house the fire department emergency access key(s). For Key Boxes, see LSB Standard 05, "Key Boxes".

##### **2.3 High-rise Building.**

A high-rise building as defined by the *Building Code*. Generally, a building where the topmost occupiable floor is 75 feet above grade. For buildings over 3 stories in height, refer to LSB Standard 19, "Building Access Key Boxes (Non-High-rise)".

##### **2.4 High-rise Survey Forms.**

Survey forms (HFD Form 27) that have been compiled by the HFD Operations Division, to provide a variety of fire and life-safety information about a building, it's contents and it's fire protection systems, that are necessary for use in event of an emergency within that building.

##### **2.5 Mobility Impaired List.**

A list, by name, impediment and work location, of persons who may have some type of physical condition or hindrance that could encumber their self-evacuation from the floor of incident or the building in event of an emergency, or who would need assistance by other personnel or an

emergency service. Persons with a short-term illness or injury need not be placed on this list. Floor Wardens and building security personnel should however be knowledgeable of any person who may be in need assistance in evacuating during an emergency.

## SECTION 3 --- GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

### 3.1 General Contents of Fire Depository Box (FDB).

The FDB shall contain only the following approved items and information:

1. Loose-leaf type binder containing required information sheets.
2. Building access keys.
3. Standardize floor plans.

**Exception:** See Section 4.2 for buildings with 24-hour on-site security personnel.

### 3.2 Binder Information Sheets.

A loose-leaf binder that is tabbed and indexed, shall contain the following completed information sheets:

1. High Rise Survey form (HFD 27, Rev. 3/2002), Completed.
2. Supplemental Information sheet. See Section 3.5.
3. Mobility Impaired List. The most current dated Mobility Impaired List giving person(s) name, nature of impairment, work floor and location. (If **NO** Mobility Impaired Persons are employed within the building, provide a sheet of paper stating “**NO MOBILITY IMPAIRED – AS OF THIS DATE**”, and date the form). The dated Mobility Impaired List shall be reviewed, verified and updated at least every 6 months.
4. Elevator Operating Instructions. Detail written instructions for elevator use. Should include elevator fire fighter re-call, cab use, and any other special details for elevator operations. (Instructions for elevator use should be obtained from building’s elevator service company.)  
See Appendix B, “Instructions for Elevator Operation”.
5. Elevator Diagram. A side view diagram of all building’s elevator shafts, showing floors served by each elevator bank, any transfer floors, shuttle elevators, or private elevators. (Where possible show any dumb-waiter, mail cart or similar shaftways.) See Appendix A for example.
6. List of emergency contact phone numbers for the building – property manager, engineer, and security company.

### 3.3 Building Emergency Access and Elevator Switch Keys.

A minimum of 5 sets of individually detachable keys shall be provided and labeled as to function. Labels shall be of a durable water-resistant material and have a minimum lettering size of 18 Font, on contrasting background so as to be readily legible (See Appendix C, for examples of key sets and labeling). The following keys shall be provided on each of the 5 sets:

**A. Building emergency access keys** – for accessing all exit stairs, mechanical and electrical rooms and spaces, roof access doors or hatches, standpipe and sprinkler system control valves, and special hazard spaces.

- Keys needed for roof access (if not on the building master key) shall be labeled as **ROOF ACCESS** and identify which stair(s) provides roof access.

**B. Elevator switch keys** – There shall be a uniform key, that is not part of a building master system, for all Phase I Recall and Phase II firefighter elevator car operations.

- If one key actuates both elevator recall and car operation functions, it should be labeled, “**Elevator Fire Service**”.
- If there are two separate keys, the labels should read:

Key 1 - “**Elevator Fire Service Phase I**”

Key 2 - “**Elevator Fire Service Phase II**”

**3.4 Standardized Floor Plans.** A minimum of 3 sets of standardized floors plans, unless more are deemed necessary by the HFD. All floor plans will include the following information for each floor and/or level applicable:

- Fire Command Or Central Control Room
- Fire Depository Box
- Fire Alarm Annunciator Panel
- Public Address System Panel
- Enclosed Stairways
- Stairwell Identification
- Tenant Stairs/Escalators
- Two-Way Communication Mains
- Fire Hose Valve Connections and Cabinets
- Elevator Lobbies
- Elevator Fire Service Recall Location
- Mechanical, Electrical Service and Air Handlers Rooms
- Sprinkler Control Valves
- Fire Extinguishing Systems
- Computer Telecom Rooms with Special Extinguishing Systems
- UPS Battery Rooms
- Pre-action Protected Areas and Location of Control Valves
- Other Emergency Control or Indicating Systems
- Gas Service Main Shut-off Location
- Smoke Removal Controls
- Emergency Generator

### **3.5 Supplemental Information Sheet.**

Supplemental information sheet should contain the following information sections:

**3.5.1 Significant building information.** Important information needed by the fire department, in a bullet format, on hazards or precautions peculiar to that building. (Ex: Presence of Shunt Trips, Lack of emergency generator, Lack of direct roof access from stairways, Hazardous materials/flammable liquid storage locations)

**3.5.2 Pertinent building information.** Pertinent to High-rise survey form (HFD 27, Rev. 3/2002), but not contained within the high-rise survey form, or where more narrative information maybe needed.

#### **A. Building information.**

- Is sprinkler system(s) supplied by building’s standpipe riser
- Number of stairs: pressurized or non-pressurized

- Exit stairway discharge locations
- Identify exit points to public way
- Evacuees will be directed to what location(s)
- Building construction type – Steel, Concrete

**B. Elevator information.**

- Are elevators equipped with “Shunt Trips”.
- Are Sprinklers in elevator machine rooms.
- Are Sprinklers in elevator hoistway.
- Alternate Recall Floors identified.

**C. Standpipe system information.**

- Working pressure on systems with Pressure Reducing Valves (PRV) on fire hose connections.
- Do Fire Department Connections (FDC) supply individual standpipe risers.

## **SECTION 4 --- LOCATION OF FIRE DEPOSITORY BOX (FDB)**

### **4.1 Fire Depository Box placement.**

The FDB shall be located within the building’s *Fire Command Center*, *Central Control Station*, or *Emergency Control Center* in buildings that have such dedicated rooms. In buildings that lack a Fire Command Center, the FDB shall be located in or near the Main Lobby of the Building, where it can be readily identified and accessed.

### **4.2 Fire Depository “Key” Box.**

If 24-hour security is located on site, the Fire Department loose-leaf information binder and floor plans (without keys) may be retained at the security station and a locked FDB of a size that will accommodate all the key sets may be provided.

### **4.3 Locks on FDB.**

Locks must be either of the type used on a “9-1-1” Box (openable with a special fire department key), or of a type that can be readily cut off of the box with bolt cutters (reinforced, harden or short-shank locks shall not be used).

### **4.4 Double Locking Box.**

FDB using a “9-1-1” Lock shall have a double locking system to facilitate property personnel’s access to update information or replace keys.

## **SECTION 5 --- FIRE DEPOSITORY BOX / KEY BOX PERMIT**

### **5.1 Permit Requirement**

A fire department **KEY BOX / FIRE DEPOSITORY BOX** permit is required for the lock box. This permit shall be renewed annually, and a copy of the permit shall be posted in or near the FDB.

### **5.2 Permit Information**

New Key Box / Fire Depository Box permits may be obtained from the Houston Fire Department Permit Office, 1205 Dart Street (off of Houston Avenue); Telephone: 713-247-8557. Annual permit renewal notices are mailed out by the Fire Department Permit Section, however, it is the permit holder’s responsibility to renew all permits prior to the stated expiration date.

## APPENDIX A

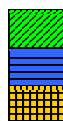
**Elevator Riser Diagram:** Generic Elevator and Stairwell Diagram

		Elevator Service																		Stair	
Floor	A	High Bank						Middle Bank						Low Bank						B	Floor
PH																					PH
35								7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		35
34																					34
33																					33
32																					32
31																					31
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2																					2
1																					1
B																					B

----- Elevator Car No.s -----



Elevator Service  
No elevator service in bank  
Floor of Recall



Stairwell  
Stairwell Re-Entry  
Floor of Alternate Recall

## APPENDIX B

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELEVATOR OPERATION

<b>ELEVATOR MACHINE RM. SPRINKLED:</b>	_____	_____	
	<b>yes</b>	<b>no</b>	
<b>ELEVATOR SHAFTS SPRINKLED:</b>	_____	_____	
	<b>yes</b>	<b>no</b>	
<b>SHUNT TRIPS:</b>	_____	_____	
	<b>yes</b>	<b>no</b>	
<b>PHASE 1 ELEVATOR RECALL</b>	_____	_____	_____
	<b>auto</b>	<b>manual</b>	<b>both</b>
<b>PRIMARY RECALL FLOOR</b>	_____		
<b>(Designated Landing)</b>			
<b>ALTERNATE RECALL FLOOR</b>	_____		
<b>(Alternate Landing)</b>			

**To recall elevators:** Specify manual recall procedure. \*If doors close after being recalled, specify how to re-open and how long they remain open.

**To operate car:** \*\*Specify if cab fire key (Phase Two) must be turned to “on” to operate elevators. Specify if different keys are used for Phase One and Phase Two.

**To travel to desired floor:** Explain how to travel to the desired floor. Specify if the first step of this action requires the doors be open or closed.

**To close door:** Specify how to close doors completely to remain closed.

**To open door:** Specify how to open doors completely to remain open.

**To hold car at floor:** Specify how to retain the car at desired floor. Can keys be removed?

**To cancel floor selection:** Specify how to cancel the floor selected and/or choose another floor.

**To return car to designated or alternate landing:**  
Specify how to return the car to the recall floor. Specify if the key can be removed.  
Specify if a firefighter or other person must accompany the car to the recall floor.

### PROVIDE INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH (DIFFERENT) BANK OF ELEVATORS THAT MAY OPERATE INDEPENDENTLY FROM ANOTHER.

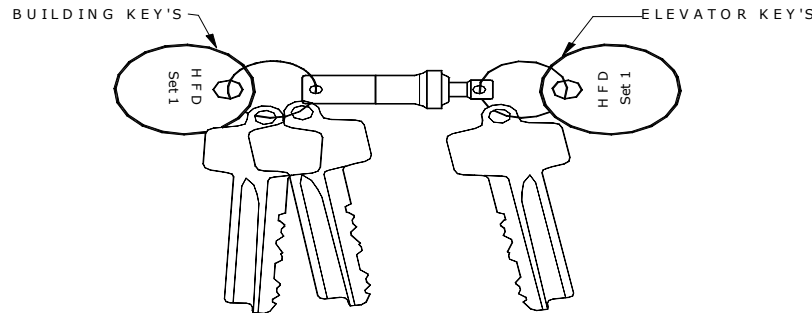
\* Buildings constructed under Houston’s high-rise code, between 1979 and 1997, may have elevator doors that open for a predetermined time and then close.

\*\* The ASME A17.1, 1984 edition, requires a *ON-OFF-HOLD* position switch in the elevator cars. Switches must be changed if they have a *BYPASS* position, disallowed in 1976.



## APPENDIX C ---- KEYS WITH IDENTIFICATION TAGS

### Emergency Access Key function identity tags, Example 1:



Each key ring should be a two-piece ring that can be separated during fire ground operations. Elevator switch keys should be provided on one side of ring and the other side should include the Emergency Access keys for the building. Each side of key ring should be provided with a legend stating what keys serve. Legend should be in a typed format and laminated.

#### KEY CODE NUMBER

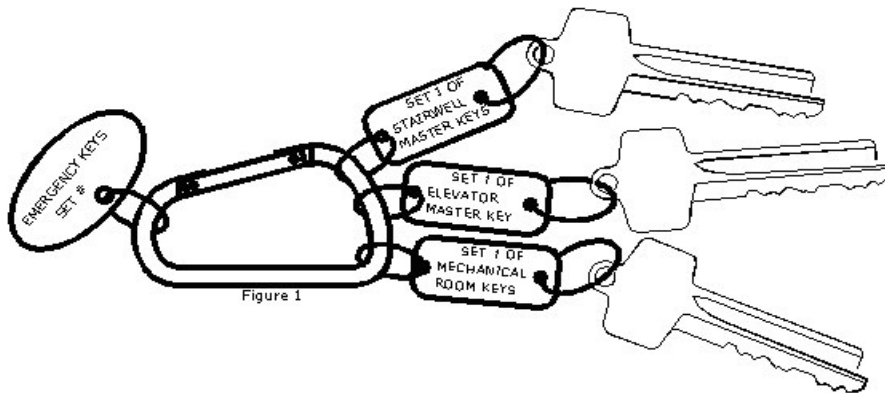
ELEVATOR KEYS		
○	XXX	= ELEVATOR FIRE SERVICE
	XXX	= ELEVATOR INDEPENDENT SERVICE

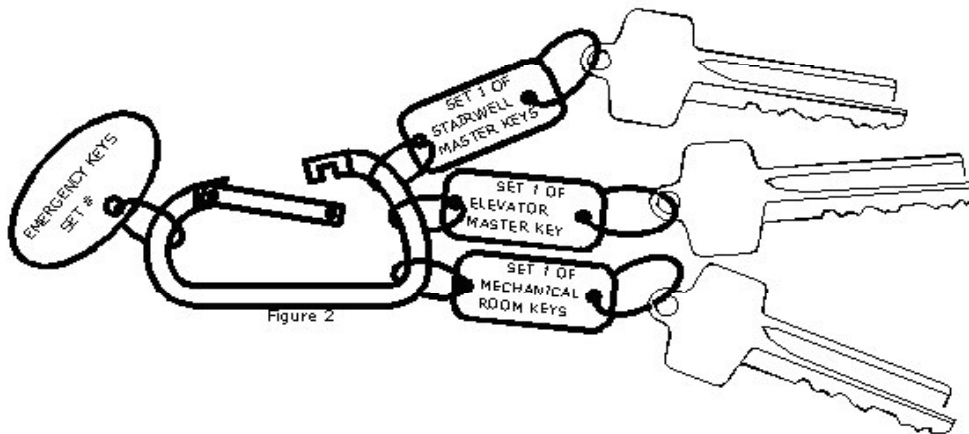
BUILDING KEYS		
○	XXX	= BUILDING ACCESS
	XXX	= STAIRWELLS

## APPENDIX C ---- KEYS WITH IDENTIFICATION TAGS

### Emergency Access Key function identity tags, Example 2:



### Emergency Access Key function identity tags, Example 2: (Open position)



1. Owner must provide a minimum of five (5) sets of keys.
2. Materials used for labeling of keys must be water resistant.
3. Text font size must be at least 18 point.
4. Each key must be removable from the main key ring.

## REFERENCES

1. City of Houston *Fire Code*, International Fire Code, 2000 edition as amended.
2. City of Houston *Building Code*, all editions.
3. LSB Standard 05, “Key Boxes”.
4. American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) , Standard No. A17.3, “Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators”, 1993 edition.